



CIRNAC Comments to NIRB

Re: Notice of Screening for Government of Nunavut's
"Gjoa Haven Municipal Drinking Water Source
Investigative Fisheries Study" Project Proposal



Nunavut Regional Office
918 Sivumugiaq Street
Iqaluit, NU, X0A 3H0

Your file - Votre référence
26YN051
Our file - Notre référence
GCdocs# 149272580

August 18, 2026

Dustin Sim
Screening Officer
Nunavut Impact Review Board
P.O. Box 1360
Cambridge Bay, NU, X0B 0C0
via NIRB public registry

Re: Notice of Screening and Comment Request for Government of Nunavut's "Gjoa Haven Municipal Drinking Water Source Investigative Fisheries Study" Project Proposal

Dear Dustin Sim,

On July 29, 2026, the Nunavut Impact Review Board (NIRB) invited parties to comment on Government of Nunavut's "Gjoa Haven Municipal Drinking Water Source Investigative Fisheries Study" project proposal. Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada (CIRNAC) appreciates the opportunity to provide comments and offers the responses below as it pertains to the NIRB's request:

Any matter of importance to the Party related to the project proposal

CIRNAC #1: Fuel Handling and Spill Response

The Project would occur at the community's municipal drinking-water source and would involve fuel-powered transportation and field equipment. The application identifies the use of a rental truck and 5 L of gasoline associated with travel to the site; however, it does not indicate whether fuel would be stored or transferred at the study area or describe how fuel-handling activities would be managed in proximity to the waterbody. The application also does not identify spill-prevention measures, spill-response equipment, or procedures for responding to a spill or release. Given the proximity of Project activities to an active municipal drinking-water source, additional information regarding fuel management and spill response would help demonstrate how the potential for a release to enter the waterbody, either directly or indirectly, would be minimized. CIRNAC recommends that the Proponent consider:

- Maintaining appropriate setbacks between any fuel storage or refueling activities and the ordinary high-water mark of the municipal drinking-water source;
- Using drip pans, secondary containment, absorbent materials, or equivalent protective measures during fuel-handling and transfer activities;



- Confirming that appropriate spill-response equipment would be readily available at the field site; and
- Identifying the procedures that would be followed to report, contain, clean up, and remove a spill or release occurring on land near, or directly into, the municipal drinking-water source.

CIRNAC #2: Site Access, Ground Disturbance, and Restoration

The Project would involve a short-duration fisheries study at the municipal drinking-water source, with field activities undertaken at or near the shoreline. However, the application does not identify the shoreline access points, indicate whether existing roads or trails would be used, or describe how unsuitable ground conditions would be addressed. Access and transportation activities could cause environmental disturbance, particularly where vehicle travel results in rutting, gouging, soil disturbance, erosion, or the transport of sediment into surface water. CIRNAC recommends that the Proponent consider:

- Using existing roads, trails, and established shoreline access points wherever practicable;
- Avoiding vehicle travel on terrain that is wet, unstable, erosion-prone, or otherwise unsuitable for travel;
- Minimizing disturbance of shoreline and riparian areas during site access and sampling activities; and
- Restoring any disturbed areas, including rutting, gouging, or shoreline disturbance, to a stable condition following completion of field activities.

CIRNAC #3: Equipment and Hazardous Materials Inventory

The Project description states that sampling may involve trap nets and electrofishing, with angling used if required. However, the equipment inventory identifies only one non-motorized boat and does not list the trap nets, electrofishing equipment, associated power source, or other equipment required to undertake the proposed field program. Although the application identifies gasoline associated with travel to the site by rental truck, it does not clarify whether the electrofishing program would require batteries, a generator, additional fuel, or other potentially hazardous materials. CIRNAC recommends that the Proponent consider:

- Providing a complete inventory of equipment and associated power sources required for the proposed field program; and
- Identifying any batteries, fuels, or other potentially hazardous materials that would be transported to or used at the study area, and describing how such materials would be stored, managed, and removed from the site to prevent releases to land or water.

CIRNAC #4: Consultation with Interested Parties

CIRNAC recommends that the Proponent continue engaging with Hamlet of Gjoa Haven, the Kitikmeot Inuit Association, the Gjoa Haven Hunters and Trappers Association, and other interested organizations and individuals on its project proposal. As part of these consultation activities, several issues should be considered, including but not limited to:



- Incorporation of Inuit Qauijimajatuqangit and community knowledge in project activities;
- Mitigation measures to prevent any disturbance to wildlife and the environment;
- Mitigation measures to prevent disturbance to sites of cultural, archaeological, and/or environmental significance;
- The experience of community members who participate in traditional harvesting activities within or in close proximity to the project area;
- Training and employment opportunities for Inuit and community members;
- Procurement opportunities for local and Inuit-owned businesses; and
- Regular updates on the status of project activities.

CIRNAC appreciates the opportunity to provide comments. Should you have any questions, please contact Muhammad Arslan by e-mail at muhammad.arslan@rcaanc-cirnac.gc.ca or David Abernethy by email at david.abernethy@rcaanc-cirnac.gc.ca.

Sincerely,



Saba Qazi
A/Manager, Impact Assessment

